

Commercial and Industrial Buildings,  
Kassler Motor Company Showroom  
Fifth and White Streets  
Dubuque  
Dubuque County  
Iowa

HABS No. IA-160-X

HABS  
IOWA,  
31-DUBU,  
13-X-

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**PHOTOGRAPHS  
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

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Historic American Buildings Survey  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver Colorado 80225

## Kassler Motor Company Showroom

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Site Location: White and Fifth Streets  
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa  
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 7.26  
Cadastral grid : NE1/4 NE1/4 S25 T89N R2E  
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'  
UTM coordinates: 15.692030.4707680  
Lot description: City Lots 309 and 310

Present Owner: Iowa Department of Transportation  
Present Usage: retail auto parts store; machine shop  
Present Condition : good

Overall Dimensions: 113'x 110'; 1 story

Orientation : east

Architectural Plan type : rectangular

Description : Foundation: reinforced concrete perimeter walls and slab.

Structure : wood frame with brick masonry bearing walls.

Ext. walls: face brick - south and east walls are running bond, west wall is common bond.

Roof : flat composition roof with brick parapet walls and concrete coping.

Chimneys : one interior corner chimney on northwest wall

Windows : most of the window openings have been covered with wood siding, but the building had large areas of plate glass on the street elevations; 5 large fixed-sash showcase windows with transoms are still visible on the south wall, 3 on the east wall; loose lintels and rowlock brick sills throughout.

Openings : (replacement) single-leaf entrance doors on east and south walls; metal sectional garage door on east wall.

Detail : brick pilasters with inset panels and tops that project slightly above the parapet of the adjacent walls demarcate the window bays.

Construction Date : c.1927

Architecture Style: 20th Century Functional

Physical History : Built between 1925 and 1928, this single-story brick building first housed the automobile showroom of the Kassler Motor Company. Owned by Moses Kassler, who also operated a junkyard and a fur and hide shop on White Street, this company represented his brief foray into the auto sales and service trade. The building is typically configured for an auto dealership of the time, with a large showroom backed by a service garage. Wood trusses clear-

spanned the spaces. After Kassler moved out, this building was used as a garage and warehouse for businesses next door [HABS No. IA-160-W], including the Geske and Becker Paint Shop, Ole's Auto Body and Paint Shop, Dubuque Auto Body and Paint Shop, and the Sieg Dubuque Company Machine Shop. This last tenant presently occupies the rear of the building; the front houses the Sieg Company auto parts store. The large showcase windows on the White Street facade have been covered with wood paneling, but the structure remains otherwise intact.

**Significance:** The Kassler Motor Company Showroom typifies the brick-clad automobile dealerships built in Dubuque's southside commercial/industrial district, both historically and architecturally.

**References:** Dubuque City Directories: 1857 - 1970.  
Sanborn Insurance Maps: 1879, 1884, 1891, 1909, 1972.  
Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory: 1882-1923.  
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."

**Compiler:** Clayton B. Fraser, Fraserdesign, Loveland Colorado  
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